



Antibiotics are not always the answer. Here's why...

Most illnesses are caused by two kinds of pathogens: **bacteria** and **viruses**. *Antibiotics are only helpful with bacterial infections, but **not** viral infections.*



What's the big deal?

Effect on you:

- Antibiotics can cause significant **side effects**, including rashes, diarrhea or more serious problems.
- Antibiotics could "mask" a true underlying medical condition that will need alternative therapy or support.

Effect on the world at large:

- **Antibiotic-resistant bacteria (AKA "Super Bugs")** have appeared because these medications have been over-prescribed; this will make treating bacterial infections more difficult as time goes on.

When are antibiotics *helpful*?

- If your health care provider diagnoses you with a probable or confirmed bacterial infection they may prescribe you antibiotics.
- Bacterial infections include **strep throat**, and some **pneumonia** and **sinus infections**.

When are Antibiotics *not helpful*?

- Most common **colds**, **bronchitis**, and even **influenza** are caused by viruses. Antibiotics are not effective against any viruses.
- The best way to treat most cold and flu symptoms is by using over-the-counter medications and self-care.

If you think you may have any kind of infection, please call UHS at (574) 631-7497.

Did you know...

In adults, the "classic" bacterial strep throat is rare. **In fact, less than 15% of throat cultures done at UHS are positive for strep!**

Check out the latest updates and more details from **the CDC:**

Saint Liam Hall, Notre Dame
(574)631-7497 - uhs.nd.edu

